

Porcelain Enamel Institute, Inc.
4004 Hillsboro Pike, Suite 224B
Nashville, TN 37215

Please Reply to:
JOHN C. OLIVER
Washington Office
5301 Seminary Road, Suite 2104
Falls Church, VA 22041
(703) 998-6222 - Fax (703) 998-6224

Jere Glover
Small Business Administration
Washington, DC

RE: SBA's Office of Advocacy

Dear Mr. Glover:

We want you to know that our association and its 100 member companies, most of which are small business firms, are indebted to the Office of Advocacy for the truly outstanding services that it provides to the small business sector. The knowledgeable and energetic efforts of the Office's very small team continue to aid and benefit us in countless ways. I am personally a little amazed they accomplish all that they do, with their limited staff dealing with a very full agenda, indeed.

Our association, and most of our member companies, have rather small staffs who must handle Washington-generated affairs. Those people involved with government matters handle them part time, along with their other main production-related duties. Only in rare instances are we able to give full time attention to any of the bevy of Federal government rules and regulations that may impact us directly or indirectly.

Here the Office of Advocacy helps us immeasurably (and often)- alerting us and keeping us posted on developing issues and helping us establish our priorities. Then, making use of its long-established close working relationship with the full association community, they make each of us aware of other groups with common interests in specific issues. Oftentimes, from this broad multi-group base, and with Office's associates providing expertise and guidance, some remarkable accomplishments are realized - such as, more reasonable and attainable regulatory levels, rules targeting smaller industrial populations rather than "everybody", sound technically based regulations and rules where cost/benefits have really been considered.

The work of the Office of Advocacy has been outstanding and really beneficial to the Porcelain Enamel Institute and a whole host of other associations with a sizable small business membership. An example of a long-time and most worthwhile effort was that dealing with Stormwater - one of those subjects that impacts just about everybody and one that has been on-going and time-consuming for most of the 1990s. On this one project alone, Kevin Bromberg and his troops earned our unending gratitude. In our opinion, the Office did yeoman service here and was the most important force in bringing a substance of reason and "real world-ness" into this massive, complicated rule.

Now, currently, the Office is an invaluable force in the on-going efforts involving EPA's Metal Products & Machinery Effluent Guidelines. As in many other previous projects, the Office is operating in its unique manner of nudging the Agency, keeping the industry sector informed and being a key factor in just about every part of the on-going activity. A MP&M proposal is scheduled for October, 2000— and our industry, as well as the many other metals-related industries to be impacted, will be far better prepared to do meaningful comments as a result of the major role of the Office of Advocacy. We are close to being optimistic that a reasonable and workable rule will emerge.

In summary, we view SBA's Office of Advocacy to be the best bargain we can identify from our tax dollar. The group understands the small business sector — and they really care ! They understand the regulatory process — and their efforts make a real difference in helping achieve rules that make some sort of sense. Certainly, they are an understaffed group and, I am quite sure, underpaid ! We totally support the proposal of a larger budget. Then, with increased funding, we support an expanded role of activity as the Office seeks to serve the needs and interests of those of us with a small business contingency that have to deal with government regulations.

Sincerely,



John C. Oliver
Manager, Washington Office
Porcelain Enamel Institute, Inc.